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WHITE RIVER REFUGE IN ARKANSAS
IS WINTER SANCTUARY FOR DUCKS

The Bureau of Biological Survey is restoring and developing 110,000 acres of hereditary waterfowl resting and wintering grounds in Monroe, Arkansas, Phillips, and Desha Counties of Arkansas.

The White River Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, established by a recent Executive order, is from 3 to 9 miles wide and stretches from a short distance north of Willow Lake, 62 miles southward along the White River almost to the point where it flows into the Mississippi. The refuge, says the Biological Survey, will provide an inviolate retreat for waterfowl. In winter the birds in this region are threatened by market hunters and other illegal killers.

Many of the waterfowl that breed in south central Canada and in the north central part of the United States and seek the main valley of the Mississippi in their fall migrations, ultimately concentrate in this area. In winter, few areas harbor as many ducks.

Approximately 85 percent of the wild waterfowl to be safeguarded and preserved are mallard ducks, with many pintails, gadwalls, and green-winged teal. When the maximum area of the refuge is finally under administration and development, it will harbor a large proportion of the mallards that use the Mississippi flyway. Other birds include wood ducks, snowy egrets, widgeon, a few coots, great blue herons, double-crested cormorants, and a number of small songsters. The area is

frequented also by numerous black and turkey vultures.

Intersected by small lakes and bayous, the refuge lies practically flat and is heavily forested with oak, cypress, and other valuable growths. Efforts are being made to improve the waterfowl-food conditions by plantings and encouragement of suitable natural growth. Former owners have reserved timber rights for selective cutting in the next few years.

CCC Workers Improving Area

A continual change is taking place in the elevation of the lake bottoms on the refuge. The whole area remains flooded for several months of the year, usually by high levels in the Mississippi, and these prolonged floods bring in much silt which gradually is filling the lakes. Two CCC camps are throwing low dams across the outlets of some of these lakes to check this silting.

At St. Charles, on the northwest boundary of the refuge, tentatively chosen as an administration site, the CCC workers will construct administration buildings, including a high look-out tower. Two other look-out towers at strategic points will aid a rigid patrol policy.

Because of the large bayou area to be administered, two house boats with living quarters for 6 men each, will be used as outposts of enforcement and patrol. CCC workers are clearing channels to permit the passage of small patrol boats, establishing truck trails and one auto road, and are putting up telephone lines to the outside world and between the look-out towers and administration buildings. Short-wave radio will serve the houseboat patrols.